TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

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Christ and the Dynamic World Society

Photo by A. Devaney, Inc., New York

HENRY S. RANDOLPH

• When we take a searching look at our human world, we witness hunger for nourishing food; eagerness to be healed of disease; a constant push for a higher standard of living; a struggle to dispel illiteracy and ignorance; a fight for political freedom, human rights, and justice.

Last summer I had a look at some human conditions of the world and their force in producing rapid social change. In Italy and Greece changes have resulted from the national land reform programs, rural-urban migration of people, and new economic and social organizations, including cooperatives.

In the mountainous agrarian areas of Greece, villages with an extremely low economic base are for the first time experiencing the advantages of a road to their village, bus service, a post office, a telephone, and electricity. These changes have introduced these people to a new world.

At the ecumenical conference on Rapid Social Change, held at Thessaloniki in Greece, under the auspices of the World Council of Churches, I had the opportunity of looking at many strategic places of the world through the hearts and lives of 155 devoted Christians from thirty-five different nations. For nine days sociologists, economists, government officials and churchmen studied together the conditions, problems and dilemmas induced by rapid political, social and economic changes in different parts of the world. Many members of this conference came from the new nations in Africa and Asia.

The 1959 conference on Rapid Social Change was held on the soil of an ancient highly-developed civilization—the land which gave birth to art, beauty, law, philosophy, literature, and democracy. It is a land rich in religious traditions, for the ancient Greeks had gods for everything. Then Paul heard the Macedonian call, "Come over and help

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• Paul C. Johnson, who describes "The Greatest Need in Rural Life Today"—Page 5—is Editor of the *Prairie Farmer*, Chicago, Illinois.

• "The Value Problem in Rural Community Development"—Page 10—was written by Roy C. Buck, Professor of Rural Sociology at Pennsylvania State University.

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December, 1959

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us." He went to Thessaloniki and Berea in Macedonia, and then to Athens, where he preached to the people on Mars Hill beneath the shadow of the Acropolis covered with temples dedicated to the ancient gods and goddesses of Greece. From Athens he found his way to Corinth where at the temple of Apollo he preached to the Corinthians. Now ninety-six percent of the people of Greece are members of the Greek Orthodox Church, which is a member of the World Council of Churches.

At the conference on Rapid Social Change, held at Anatolia College in Thessaloniki, we heard about the 700,000,000 people who within the past fifteen years have gained political freedom. Their leaders are the first to admit that they know too little about how to use this freedom well, and how to cope with all the problems and responsibilities accompanying it. They want to develop their countries industrially and economically like the Western nations. They face realistically the need for professional and technical leadership and capital. They yearn to have their teeming millions of hungry people fed.

We were told that in Africa there exists the greatest hunger blight on the face of the earth. They face the problem of a rapidly growing population, and they are conscious of the need of greater technology in agriculture, but technological development costs money which is not available.

In the midst of this rapid change, when old familiar social and economic structures are yielding to new and strange social and economic forms, the people are between two different worlds. They must make choices. Will they make the right choices? Will Christian influences and forces be there to give guidance?

They would educate and train their people for the new day which this rapid change is bringing. Seventy-five percent of the Protestant Church members in India cannot read or write. Millions are totally illiterate. The undeveloped countries face the need for teachers and other educational resources.

These people want better health for their populations. The Asian child at birth is expected to live only thirty years, a very short life, and a particularly short productive life. One million lepers are at large in India. Where are the doctors and nurses for health education and healing?

These are but a few of the many issues, problems and dilemmas faced by the Thessaloniki conference as they were lifted up by three major study groups:

1. Man in Rapid Social Cultural Change;
2. Christian Responsibility in Economic Development;
3. Christian Responsibility in Political Action in Rapid Social Change Areas.

Our American frustrations caused by rapid industrial and social change seemed minor as compared with other lands. In rural and urban America we have resources that may be harnessed and developed to meet effectively most of our problems, but in rural villages and towns of these other lands where our brethren in Christ live, there are fewer resources and little trained manpower and capital for their development.

The leaders of the younger sister churches were outstanding in their participation in the conference. Among them was my brilliant roommate, the Professor of Economics in Tokyo University. These leaders need our prayers and our help in many ways. This is a critical moment for us as town and country churchmen to re-evaluate our Christian experience in a land of abundance and vast opportunity and to lead others to recognize their proper Christian relation to others of our one world. Our creative scientists have brought us within a whispering distance of all peoples of the globe. We hear the cry of old, "Come over and help us." Christ was sent to all, the whole wide world of humanity, not merely to the fortunate few of highly privileged lands.

☆ ☆ ☆

The Miracle

There was a humble couple
Went down to Bethlehem—
And trudged the cold streets, finding
No roof to shelter them.

The master of the great Inn
Cried loudly from his door:
"Away! I have no room here
For ye who are so poor."

Then wearily did Joseph
Lead Mary through the night
While all the town lay sleeping
Under a strange star's light.

They came upon a stable,
Wind-battered and forlorn,
And there upon a bed of straw
At dawn a King was born.

And miracles have happened
On land and sea since then,
And many kings and nobles
Have had their way with men.

But all the books of wonder
Tell naught so strange as this,
And never king who lived had
A Kingdom like to His.

—C. B. Christophersen

Church Building Booming in Sweden

• Sweden is on the threshold of a new and vigorous church building period as a result of growing urbanization and continuing expansion of industry, according to an official of the (State Lutheran) Church of Sweden.

The Rev. Lars Ridderstedt, director, Office of Church Construction of the Stockholm Diocese, said the State Church alone plans to build 300 edifices.

He reported new churches are springing up in residential areas within existing city limits as well as on urban fringes, in industrial communities, and in newly-created developments along highways.

Sweden last experienced a church building boom toward the end of the 19th century, Mr. Ridderstedt noted. Current emphasis, he said, is on small churches "which, in effect, sometimes become community centers with many physical facilities besides the purely ecclesiastical ones." This multi-purpose church, while common in the U.S.A., is new to Sweden, he added.

Peace Prize Presented to Albert Schweitzer

• Dr. Albert Schweitzer, celebrated philosopher and medical missionary in French Equatorial Africa, was presented in Copenhagen, Denmark, with the Sonning Peace Prize for his outstanding contributions to European culture.

The presentation of the prize, which was established by Copenhagen University with funds bequeathed by the late C. J. Sonning, a Danish editor, was made at a ceremony in the University attended by Danish Prime Minister Hans Christian Hansen. With it went a gift of $14,300 for Dr. Schweitzer's hospital work in the African jungles.

At another ceremony held later at Christian Christinaborg Castle, Mr. Hansen presented the 84-year-old Alsatian-born humanitarian with a check for $140,000. This was part of the receipts from a Danish film depicting Dr. Schweitzer's work in Africa.

The Importance of the Rural Church

• Take, for example, the little Baptist Church at West Royalston, Massachusetts, which has served its rural community since 1768. At the present time there are only eight or ten resident members on the roll, about the same number as when it was organized. At no time during its history has it had more than fifty members; yet during its 191 years of service it has given to religion six ministers' wives and twenty-nine ministers, among whom were at least two pioneer home missionaries. Scores of church members have gone out to take their places in other Baptist churches, 168 have gone into civic and community life throughout the country.

During all this time the church has had its ups and downs. Someday, although we hope not, it may have to disband, but it can never cease to exist. One can never trace the ultimate influence of that church in the life of the world.

—From *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Baptist Convention*

Inheritors of Heaven's Graces

They that have power to hurt, and will do none,
That do not do the thing they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold, and to temptation slow—
They rightly do inherit Heaven's graces,
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others, but stewards of their excellence.
The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
Though to itself it only live and die;
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves his dignity:
For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

—William Shakespeare

Dr. Weatherhead Retires

• Dr. Leslie D. Weatherhead, sixty-six, often called the "best known religious writer in the English speaking world," has intimated his impending retirement as pastor of London's famed City Temple after twenty-three years in that post.

A former president of the Methodist Conference of Great Britain, Dr. Weatherhead has been "on loan" to the interdenominationally prominent "Cathedral of Non-Conformity," which is Congregational in government and affiliation. He is the author of some twenty-five books, mainly on spiritual therapy and pastoral counseling.

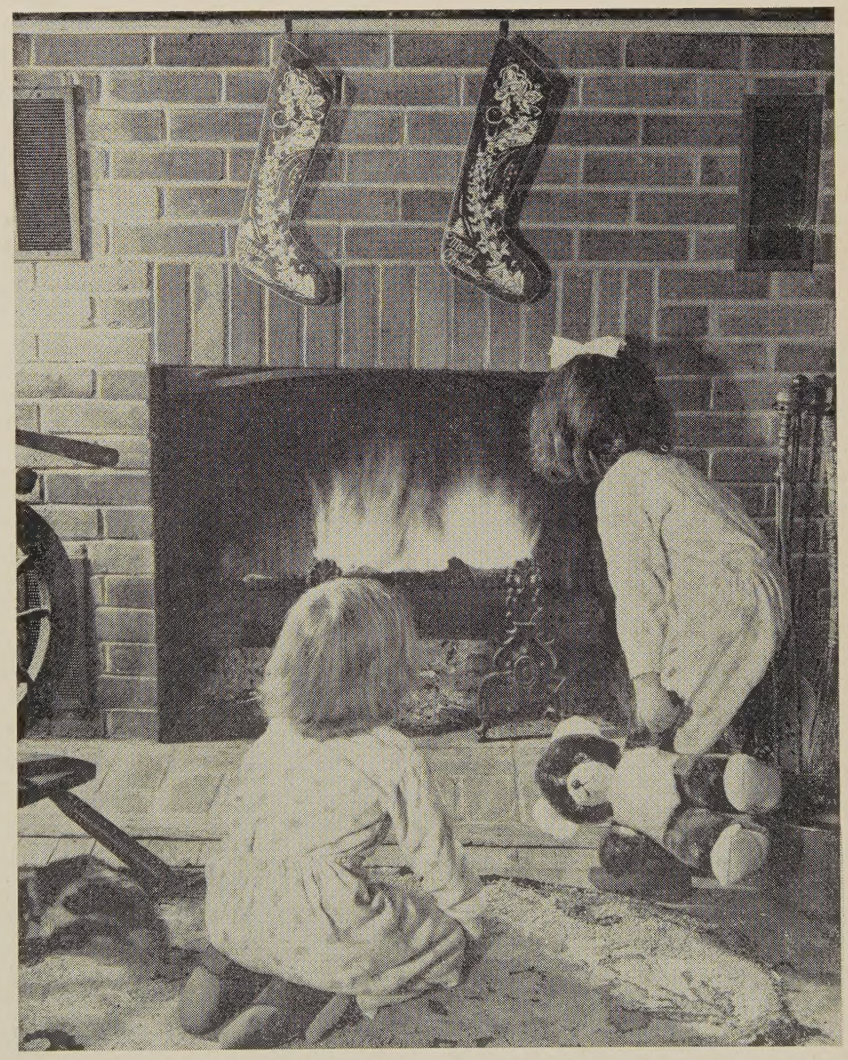

Photo by A. Devaney, Inc., New York

A Christmas Hymn

It was the calm and solemn night!—
Seven hundred years and fifty-three
Had Rome been growing up to might,
And now was Queen of land and sea!
No sound was heard of clashing wars;
Peace brooded o'er the hushed domain;
Apollo, Pallas, Jove, and Mars,
Held undisturbed their ancient reign,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago.

'Twas in the calm and silent night!
The senator of haughty Rome
Impatient urged his chariot's flight
From lordly revel rolling home!
Triumphal arches gleaming swell
His breast with thoughts of boundless sway:
What recked the Roman that befell
A paltry province far away,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago!

Within that province far away
Went plodding home a weary boor:
A streak of light before him lay,
Fall'n through a half-shut stable door
Across his path. He passed—for naught
Told what was going on within;
How keen the stars! his only thought;
The air how calm and cold and thin
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago!

O strange indifference!—low and high
Drowsed over common joys and cares:
The earth was still—but knew not why;
The world was listening—unawares;
How calm a moment may precede
One that shall thrill the world for ever!
To that still moment none would heed,
Man's doom was linked no more to sever
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago!

It is the calm and solemn night!
A thousand bells ring out, and throw
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite
The darkness, charmed and holy now!
The night that erst no name had worn,
To it a happy name is given;
For in that stable lay new-born
The peaceful Prince of Earth and Heaven,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago.

—Alfred Domett

Boy Scouts Celebrate Golden Anniversary

• Because of the close ties that have existed between the Protestant churches and the Boy Scouts of America since its inception in 1910 a large number of churches are making plans to observe the 50th anniversary of Scouting during the year 1960. The celebration will include dramatic events on both the national and local levels. The theme of the anniversary year will be "For God and Country."

Boy Scout Week

In a special celebration held in Washington, D. C., during Boy Scout Week, February 7-13, a representative Scout or Explorer from each state and territory will make a report to President Eisenhower in person. High-ranking churchmen will join with other national leaders in a Report to the Nation breakfast.

During Boy Scout Week many activities and events will take place in local communities all over America. A high light of the week's festivities will be the observance of Scout Sunday or Sabbath in the churches and synagogues. On this day all Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Explorers are urged to attend the church of their choice in uniform, and clergymen are being requested to give recognition to the 50th anniversary of Scouting.

50th Anniversary Meeting

Celebration of the golden jubilee will be a high light of the 50th Annual Meeting of the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America to be held in Washington, D. C., June 1-4, 1960. Included on the program will be a recognition of the part that many cooperating institutions and organizations have played in making Scouting available to boys during the last fifty years.

The Jubilee Jamboree

One of the most dramatic events of the jubilee celebration will be the Fifth National Jamboree of the Boy Scouts of America which will be held at Colorado Springs, Colorado, July 22-28. Over 50,000 Scouts, Explorers, and leaders will attend this great encampment.

Religious Institutions Involved

Since over half of all Scout units chartered by the Boy Scouts of America are in religious institutions they have a large share in the Scouting program and a great interest in the events that will take place in the Jubilee Year. Churches and synagogues that sponsor Scout units can do much to make this anniversary celebration significant in the lives of the boys whom they serve through Scouting.

On Scout Sunday, emphasis again this year will be on family worship.

Town & Country Church

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Contributors of articles to TOWN AND OUNTRY CHURCH speak for themselves and ot for the National Council of Churches r sponsoring organizations.

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

The Greatest Need in Rural Life Today*

PAUL C. JOHNSON

• The American people are getting a bit tired of hearing about the farmer and his problems. While some may have gained the impression that the farmer is a pampered crybaby, most thinking persons realize the persistent farm problem arises from a succession of severe stresses that have afflicted agriculture both as a segment of the economy and as a way of life.

Farming is indeed in the grip of strong economic and technological forces, and the rural community is changing rapidly. Agriculture is becoming more a business and less a way of life. Farm folk are becoming more like city people. While farmers seek to improve their living standards by working off the farm, city people try to escape the urban rat race by moving out into the country to live.

Everywhere there is change, exciting, but also uncomfortable for many, tragic for some. Persons who have been convinced that the old-fashioned farm family is the balance wheel of American civilization are alarmed over these changes. Depending on our personal background and political outlook, we are inclined to label the changes good or bad. While recognizing the apparent irresistibility of a force such as mechanization, we search for ways to slow it down and look wistfully at political panaceas. In this respect we are not different from other generations who have faced similar problems.

Intelligent people with a sense of social responsibility must necessarily try to temper the forces and mold them to the benefit of mankind. Agriculture exists to serve people. Land exists to serve people, and the nature of its use changes with the changing need. Even in the midst of abundance we have apprehension about the future food supply in a world where population is increasing at an explosive rate.

Those of us who were reared in a rural setting and who are by profession engaged in the preservation of rural values have special concerns about what is happening. Changes which challenge and often undermine rural tradition invite us to re-examine these values to see if they are really useful to the happiness of man or only nostalgic ghosts of a departed way of life.

Personally, I think there is great need to re-examine the spiritual, cultural and citizenship values that have been associated with the rural community. Farming methods and social patterns are bound to change under the impact of modern science and population mobility. What do these changes imply? What is feasible? What is best for us all?

Values Worth Preserving

It is well at this point to ask ourselves a basic question. What are the rural characteristics which we are so eager to preserve? Let's begin by admitting they were not all plus values. I can remember that the old rural communities had their share of bigotry, fear of strangers, ethnic and religious intolerance, and aversion to education lest it upset old ideas.

Nevertheless, the virtues did, I believe, outnumber and outpull the vices. We remember with pleasure the stronger sense of family which was prevalent then. We took care of each other. Great-grandpa and grandma seldom ended up in the old people's home. The family reunion was a rich and enduring experience, full of what someone has called the "manufacture of human sentiment."

Also on the plus side must be recorded the habits of productive

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* From an address at the Rural Pastors' Institute, University of Minnesota, April 20, 1959.

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work, honesty and frugality passed from father to son and mother to daughter because they worked side by side. Add to these the tradition of fearing and serving the Lord, the solid responsibility of ownership and personal initiative, and a strong sense of doing important work in feeding the world. Neighborliness was a cornerstone of the community and shared work a habit.

I would like to add a curiosity about and an appreciation of nature as a revelation of God's plan, but I am afraid many farm people flunked this one.

Looking back over these plus values of rural life, I am struck by the fact that they were effective to the degree in which responsible character had been developed in the individual adult of the community. They were a product of the ideals which somehow had found their way into the minds of country people, rather than a direct result of the simple life dominated by hard labor and isolation.

Stewardship and the Farmer

In my attempt to sort out the good and the bad in the present confusion of values, I find stewardship to be a valuable yardstick.

The implications of the agricultural revolution have had a sobering effect on all responsible rural leaders. To some it has indeed been downright frightening. The surge of agricultural production that has come with application of machinery and scientific know-how has left us pretty much breathless. Millions have left the farm. Still there are too many on the land to be fruitfully employed. In fact, we are rapidly approaching the point where only one family in 20 is needed to till the soil. In America only five percent of the people will be farmers. In many countries of the world this percentage is 50, 70 or even 90.

The blossoming of our farming skills has upset the agricultural economy and led to many government programs intended to prevent or cushion the adjustment. These efforts have not been outstandingly successful, and we find ourselves with a huge carryover of government-held products and a current production estimated at about eight percent more than effective demand or need, depending on how we look at it.

Attempts to divert this abundance to philanthropic uses have been frustrating to both givers and receivers. We are tempted sometimes to think of this abundance as a curse rather than a boon to mankind. We are going to have trouble with this adjustment in farm population and resource inputs for many years to come.

I don't think there's any question but that the farmer himself made the choice in favor of a scientific, mechanized agriculture. When he chose the tractor as against the horse, the combine as against the binder, the electric motor as against the hand pump, he cast his lot with a new kind of agriculture which requires only a fraction of the number of workers. In olden days farmers were pinned to the land by the need for large amounts of human labor. A strong back and a willingness to work was once a mark of a successful farmer. Today these attributes have lost value in the market place. The farmer lets machinery do his heavy work and pins his hopes of success on engineering skills, managerial ability, and business acumen.

Is this bad? If we apply the yardstick of stewardship I think it is good. Mechanical invention and applied science are as much a part of God's creation as land and weather. Somehow we must cope with the bewildering adjustments which are precipitated by these new tools and see that they are used to improve man's happiness and his ability to serve God.

Of course, we could make room for many more people on the farm if we abandoned modern machinery and went back to two horses on a walking plow. Once upon a time pastors served their rural congregations by trudging on foot from home to home. Later they found they could cover more territory and do better work by riding horseback or driving in a buggy. When the automobile came along, clergymen were among the first to adopt this aid. They quickly earned the reputation for being the hardest drivers in the community.

We can all agree it would be poor stewardship for the preacher to go back to traveling on foot. Of course, he would have more time to meditate on his sermons and the trials and tribulations in this vale of tears during his long foot journeys!

It's the same with agriculture. The simple life has some attractive features, but it would be bad stewardship in our day to ignore the scientific and mechanical tools that have doubled and quadrupled the usefulness of man.

I was reared on a one-family farm. On this dairy farm we worked hard six and a half days a week. We were lucky if we could quit work at noon on the Fourth of July and on Christmas Day. Other holidays were ignored and no one ever thought of taking a vacation. There was work for everybody all the time.

Later in life as a country editor I got acquainted with a different system which might properly be called a two-family farm. This was a larger farm, better equipped with labor-saving machinery and capable of supporting two families. I immediately saw the tremendous advantage of this larger unit. No longer was it necessary for the son to pull stakes and leave because his father wasn't ready to quit farming. If there was no son in the family, there was room for a married hired man who for financial or other reasons would probably not have an opportunity to own a farm. The two families changed off baby sitting for both children and livestock, and it was not uncommon for the operator and the hired man to take turns taking a vacation.

If we put our best thinking to the problem, we're likely to come up with this conclusion that the two-family farm is the best under present circumstances. This must be a good sized farm, capable of supporting a full complement of modern machinery and modern living aids for two families. This means an investment of $100,000 or more. It also means that the two families together will

have a productivity approximately the same as ten families in grandfather's day. I believe that this is good stewardship.

Poverty in the Midst of Abundance

I hope fervently that this two-family farm which makes fuller use of the farmer's talent and modern invention can become the standard economic unit of the future. Its economic efficiency appears to be satisfactory by present standards. The required capital investment presents a real problem, but we have reason to believe this can be managed.

The danger in the present situation is that the competitive drive for economic survival may become so intense that there is created a farmer who is strictly an economic man—and that, I sincerely believe, is not what God intended he should be.

Capital and managerial requirements of modern farming may become so great that we are driven steadily into industrial farming. We may end up with a 10 or 20 family farm with employer-labor relationships no different from those in urban industry. The drive for survival through efficiency is so compelling a force that it can dominate the individual and glorify the attainment of material goals to the exclusion of others.

As one wise man has said, economic ambitions are good servants but bad masters. A reasonable amount of economic efficiency is necessary in any vigorous society. But to make efficiency into an end in itself is to destroy its usefulness.

We like to think that efficiency produces the leisure that makes possible the cultural and spiritual enrichment of life. But we have about as abundant evidence that the modern capitalistic system does not easily slow down with a sufficiency of the material needs of daily life. It increases its tempo by feverish creation of new wants. With truly religious fervor we are exhorted to consume more in order that we can produce more in order that we can consume more and keep the economy in a constant state of dynamic expansion. This has, indeed, become a religion among its advocates. God Himself has been claimed by Madison Avenue and the laws of dynamic production have been clothed with ecclesiastical authority.

It has been said the biggest miscalculation Karl Marx made in proposing his system is that he assumed capitalism would destroy itself with this increasing tempo of selfishness. Man would cease to be his brother's keeper and the state would have to take over.

This brings me to the heart of my theme. The great need of rural life is to increase its spiritual and cultural content. As economic attainments grow more compelling, we must double our attentions directed toward building the character factors I mentioned in connection with preservation of rural values. A higher and higher level of living, largely a material yardstick, does not automatically bring about this achievement of the whole man. Neither does education if education is pointed primarily at increasing income and furthering productivity.

It's odd how helpless we have become when we confront the goal of spiritual enrichment of life. The economist grabs his hat and leaves when we start talking about "value judgments." The sociologist gets all tangled up in population dynamics and never comes out of the professional woods. The extension worker gets a lost feeling and hides his helplessness by redoubling his efforts in domestic and agricultural science. Even the preacher tends to swing between extremes, the gospel of salvation in another world and the gospel of humanitarianism through social legislation.

What we educators and spiritual counselors really want for our generation is to develop a people happy in the service of God and their fellowmen. We want a people wise enough to put material things in their place and strike out boldly and eagerly to improve and enjoy human relations, to search for knowledge, to create beauty in all its forms, to seek solitude to enlarge the soul and human companionship to give it meaning, to seek the adventure of human understanding. How can we convert these pretty words into the stuff of human happiness and spiritual growth?

I still believe that the rural setting is the best place to achieve these ends and that the new rural community can make a great contribution to a revitalized and spiritualized American people.

Multiplication of material wants is strictly a dead-end street. It will make us increasingly poor rather than rich. Eventually a leaner and hungrier race of men will overrun us.

We must understand better what is happening to us and put the economic and technological changes in their proper perspective. Then we must decide that these shall be the servants and not the masters of men.

The surest way to do this is to learn that freedom lies, not in multiplication of creature comforts or luxury living, but in the creation and enjoyment of non-material experiences and values. In this the newcomers to the rurban community, who escaped to the country in search of something they wanted very bad, can be of real help to farm people who often cannot see the forest for the trees.

We must re-assess the stewardship of agriculture and re-examine the uses of the land. Our technological advances have solved, at least for the foreseeable future, the problem of food supply. Large acreages of land are in the process of being released for other uses. What should these uses be and what is the responsibility of rural people in seeing that proper steps are taken?

What contribution does the rural countryside have to make to the happiness of man over and beyond freeing him from the pangs of hunger? Let's seek out these elements, interpret them and talk about them more. For every triumph over hunger and want, let there be an equal intensification of interest in nature's gifts over and beyond the full belly!

What do we know about the farmer who has embraced the modern technology of agriculture and come out successful? About the farmer who has failed to keep up, and who

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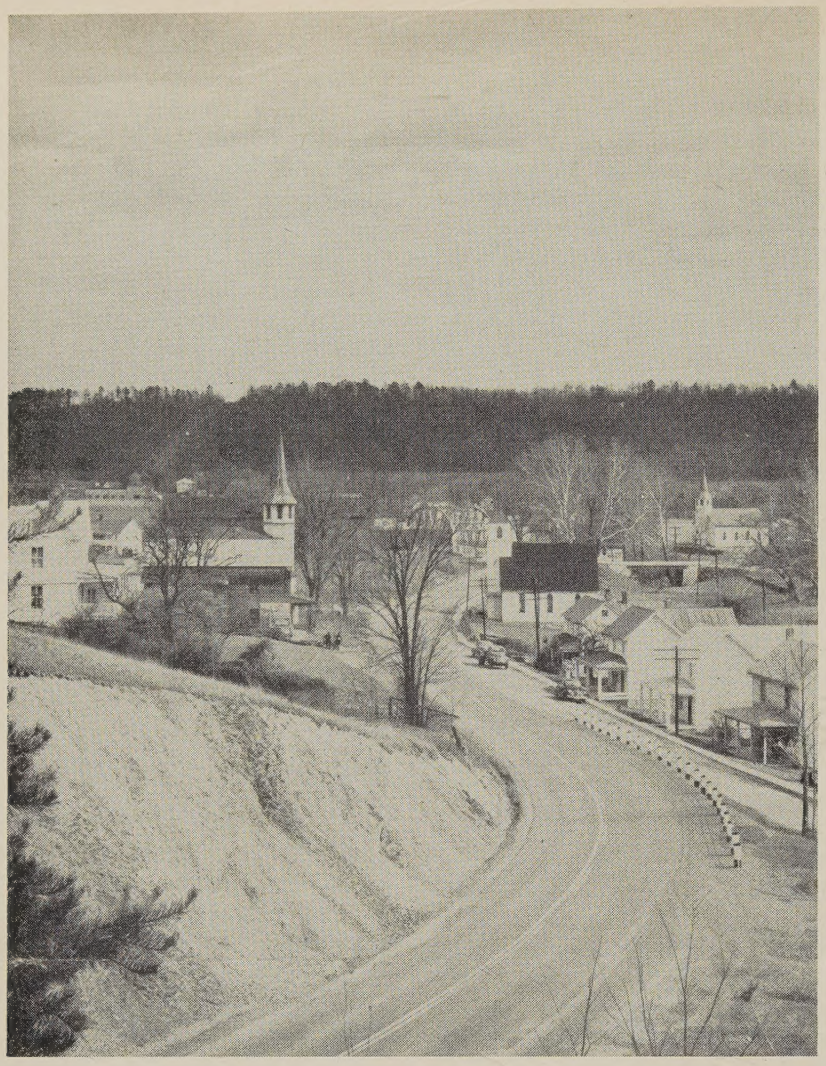

Photo by Eva Luoma

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is caught in the backwash of the great tide? Of the man of many tensions from the city who has joined the farmer out in the rurban community? What do we know about their human needs and their problems of working together in a very complex and dangerous world? All of a sudden these people are called on to practice citizenship worldwide in scope and space high in significance.

Are we teaching them what they need to know and believe?

I dare say we know less about man and his needs than did the Gospel writers who set down the teachings of Jesus, or the Greeks who produced the classics.

Yes, we have these scriptures to guide us, but each generation must create its own scriptures. Inherited spiritual concepts are merely skeletons until we clothe them with spiritual muscle. And spiritual muscle we must build ourselves by thinking and talking and experiencing and doing the things we should be doing.

This is what all America must do, not rural America alone. Don't you think we have a special stewardship in this matter? Americans came to us for food and, by the grace of God, we fed them well. Is this the goal and the end? When they ask us for that which is more than food, will we shake our heads and send them away?

Christmas

• What more perfect word could have been found to announce the Son than this lovely word *Wonderful!* This word brings to mind so many things: a little child's eyes filled with wonder as he hears the story of the coming of the Christ child into the world—the tones of a great organ filling the sanctuary of a majestic cathedral—the cleansing miracle of the new birth as it is felt in the soul of a man long estranged from God.

—Zula Evelyn Coon in *Worship Services from the Hymns* (Fleming H. Revell Company)

• Joseph and Mary, with the Babe, went far away into a strange country—and there listened for a message from an angel.

To go along life's highway—or any segment of it—listening for angels! That immediately and automatically gives direction and tone to the journey. It reduces the tendency to be impatient and querulous. It makes one rise with eager hope every morning: "Perhaps this is the day!"

—Webb B. Garrison in *Sermon Seeds from the Gospels* (Fleming H. Revell Company)

• The poinsettia is a plant of exquisite beauty. It also symbolizes for many of us the shining star that led the steps of the Wise Men. This association of the fiery leaves of the poinsettia with the star of Bethlehem makes it meaningful adornment for our churches and homes.

—Charles L. Allen and Charles L. Wallis in *Candle, Star and Christmas Tree* (Fleming H. Revell Company)

• To us the thought of shepherds watching their flocks is romantic and as far removed from life as a picture on a Christmas card. But the shepherds were just men going about their daily work. Ordinary people doing their duties faithfully are more likely to learn the secrets of God than monks secluded in artificially restricted quarters. To these men came God's sudden revelation. Christianity is not man's search for God but God's good news to man.

—Donald T. Kauffman in *The Gist of the Lesson* (Fleming H. Revell Company)

College Sponsors Religious Book Contest

• A $7,500 Bross Foundation prize for the best book correlating an area of learning and the Christian religion will be awarded at Lake Forest College (Lake Forest, Illinois) at the end of a year-long international competition September 1, 1960.

Established in 1879 by pioneer Chicago businessman William Bross, a founder, trustee and long-time benefactor of the college, the decennial award is a memorial to his son, Nathaniel.

Not limited to scholars, the competition is open to men and women of every pursuit throughout the world. Under terms of the bequest, essence of the work must "demonstrate the divine origin of the Christian Scriptures and show further how science and revelation coincide to prove the existence, the providence, or any and all of the attributes of the Christian Deity," said John R. Howard, acting president of the college.

Winner of the first Bross award, in 1880, was Mark Hopkins, American educator who for thirty-six years was president of Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts. The 1950 prize went to Professor Amos N. Wilder, then of the University of Chicago and now on the faculty of Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts. In all, the foundation has recognized fourteen authors, eight of them residents of Scotland, England or Lebanon.

Proverbs of the People From Poor Richard's Almanac

Make haste slowly.

Things which hurt instruct.

Forewarned, forearmed.

'Tis easy to see, hard to foresee.

Time is an herb that cures all diseases.

The worst wheel of the cart makes the most noise.

Let him that scatters thorns not go barefoot.

Search others for virtues, thyself for vices.

He that falls in love with himself will have no rivals.

—Benjamin Franklin

Puerto Rico Seminary Gets Lilly Endowment Grant

• A $17,500 grant has been made to the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico by the Lilly Endowment, Inc., of Indianapolis, to up-grade and strengthen its academic program.

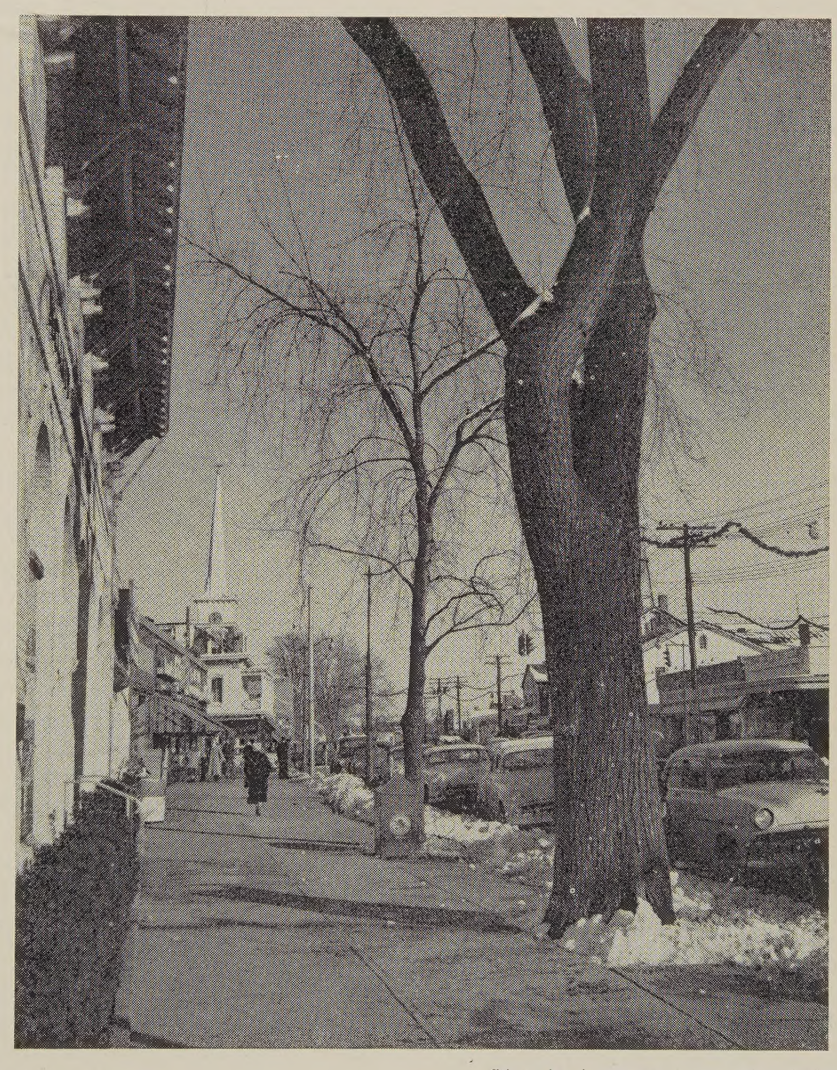
Besides the purchase of new volumes for the seminary library, the grant will enable creation of a visiting professorship during the next five years and also will help improve the school's annual Summer Institute for Protestant Ministers.

Since 1919, the Puerto Rican institution has been the official theological seminary for ministerial candidates of six Protestant denominations which have work on the island.

A Christmas Prayer

• Almighty God, whose mercy brought thee to earth in the coming of our Lord, deepen and widen our vision of thy presence among us, that thou mayst not be turned away from our crowded, busy hearts, but welcomed with joy and thankfulness. Teach us by the meekness of Jesus how to perceive thy goodness in the land of the living, that in all our coming and going, in whatsoever lonely place we may be, or occupied with many tasks, we may entertain thee to our souls' delight. *Amen.*

—From *Prayers for Daily Use,* by Samuel H. Miller



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Main Street, Babylon, Long Island, N. Y.

The Value Problem in Rural Community Development*

ROY C. BUCK

• Wherever we turn in the history of man we find evidences of a continuous striving to overcome the forces of nature and human weakness. To harness nature for man's use and to build a community of good people, provide the motivation and rationale for much of our social, economic, and political life.

Every society has some sort of value context in which this activity takes place. For the western world the Judeo-Christian tradition is the basis. The Protestant interpretation of this tradition is the major thrust in our own society. Much of what we think of as being American values, or even rural values, are Protestant in origin and can be found in other western societies or in urban areas.

The religious frame of reference is useful in analyzing the value problem. It provides certain themes which can be traced through the history of civilization. It is possible therefore to see how society functions in relation to given theme over an extended period of time. The church is extremely helpful in that its function is to keep alive the several value themes associated with the Judeo-Christian tradition. The church feels responsible to speak to the problems of human existence and to judge the quality of the human condition. The secular community feels constantly the pressure of this judgment. Thus, there is in us all a consciousness of God's eternal judgment in all of its Old Testament harshness and New Testament compassion.

The community development emphasis in rural life lends itself especially well to consideration of the value problem. We can very well ask: "Community development for what?" Here we set the stage for a discussion of man's motivation for progress. What is to be gained by improving the level of living of an area? Does full employment always mean that the social and economic life of an area is improved? How can a community experience the rewards of secular success and progress and not lose its own soul? These are not pious questions of practical irrelevance. They cut to the heart of the problem of continued human existence. They are practical questions we must all face.

One might well reason that if God ever had a chosen people they must have been the Americans. No country has ever accumulated the material wealth and physical well-being to the extent which we have in our history. No country has made the rewards of science and technology so available to a large number of people. No country has been so removed from wars, famines, revolutions, chronic poverty, exploitation, and ignorance.

On almost any measure one wishes to use we have been and are a fortunate people. United States sprang practically full blown into the world scene as a major power. In the short historic span of two centuries, we have built a life and culture of dazzling accomplishment. We worked hard. We believed that man had the manifest destiny to make the most of his human potential and to extract from the earth its resources for the good of all.

A philosophy of economic competition developed as the guiding motif for all this endeavor. Every man was indoctrinated from birth that it was his mission to rise above his past and to leave a bigger pile than he received. Competition was and continues to be one of the core elements of American philosophy. The corollary of competition, the supreme dignity of the individual regardless of station in life, helps to keep the American system alive. Indeed it may be the vital factor which makes our way of life sensible.

The search for self-fulfillment, the belief that man can solve the riddle of the Garden of Eden, has in no country had the continued attention as in the United States.

One can well imagine what it was like on that misty morning in the Garden. Adam and Eve wandering through the fields and forests, feeling the completeness of God's perfect experiment, began to think. It is probably historical accident that Eve is charged with leading Adam on. We are told, however, that she was enamoured by the tree of knowledge and that like us all she wanted to share it with someone. In other words, Eve couldn't resist the temptation to ask the question, "Why? Why me? Why Adam? Why?" Adam and Eve began to wonder and in this wondering the covenant was broken. God upset the equilibrium of Eden and dared Adam and Eve to restore it. He dared them to play God.

This is the beginning of community development. This is the eternal riddle of Eden. The sin of Adam and Eve then is the human challenge of God's omnipotent position. The heritage of Adam and Eve is our culture, our science, technology, literature, art, and all the other residue of man's struggle to find the answer.

Christianity does not provide an answer for the riddle. It points to a way of living with it. Jesus symbolizes another attempt on the part of God to create perfection. Jesus, unlike Adam and Eve, did not break under temptation. He suffered the cross of man. In this historic event God triumphed. In the wake of cross Christianity sprang up. It preached of God's forgiveness, God's love for man, God's pity for man. Christianity did not stand in opposition to civilization. Its major thrust was that of reminding people of what they are doing and to remain humble in the eyes of God in spite of secular progress. The sin of Eden is on us all. Christianity teaches us how to live with it.

Now what does all this have to do with the value problem in community development? This is not an easy question to answer. The relationships between action programs

* Address delivered at the meeting of the American Country Life Association, July, 1959.

and values and beliefs are not all clear. There is one factor that does stand out however. Action programs are the product of men's minds. They represent attempts to solve problems of human existence. They grow out of human value orientations and judgments. Action programs are objective evidence of what are the interests and concerns of humanity.

Churches, schools, public and private agencies, organizations and all the network of community life are evidences of man's attempts to solve the riddle of Eden. It cannot be denied that the work has been fruitful. Our plane of living is evidence enough. We are here today not in fear of our fellows. Laws and customs have made us an orderly people. We exist in a man-created social order. We cannot exist apart from it. We are not sufficient unto ourselves. We need each other. Now this is the problem. It is in the context of the community that the value problem is observable. The community is always to some extent restrictive on individual action. The norms of community life throttle the individual goal, fancy, or whim. It is in the context of community that values become manifest.

In the life of heavy emphasis on community organization and other forms of social engineering, every group, institution, and agency needs to evaluate its moral, philosophic, and religious position. It is to the group that man looks more and more for his cues for action. We are less than ever before masters of our own fate. We are not only in the community. We are of it. This means that our community services and agencies need not be concerned with solving the short run problems of income, crime, health, education, and so on, but we must be more concerned about the more profound problems dealing with man's concern for goals beyond the pocketbook and creature comforts.

In our economy of abundance, in our orderly community, in our technological comfort we must diligently search for the timeless values which make life bearable. We need to busy ourselves with this task. In the minds of many it is an open question as to whether the American community could withstand an all-out attack on its way of life. What do we believe in strongly enough that would carry us through a time of moral and ethical challenge? Who can say anything of more significance than the tingling cymbal?

One does not have to go far from home to find that the old patterns of ideology no longer have the impact of former years. Memorial day speeches, commencement addresses, political rallies, declarations of purpose of organizations in many instances have an archaic and outmoded quality. These are not discordant notes in the horn of plenty. They are slurred or sometimes overlooked completely. There needs to be written new scores.

The American community needs a new sense of mission, a new destiny. The 19th century battles are won. The traditional frontiers no longer provide the spirit of mission and calling. World War II and Korea rang down the curtain on an era in our civilization. The shooting stopped, but the war continued. The weapons no longer kill the body. The weapons of words dull the spirit, dampen the motivation, turn dreams into nightmares of anxiety. Words as weapons eat away at the minds of men. Perspective is lost. Life is a day-to-day routine. Like Alice in Wonderland, we wear ourselves out running so that we may stay in place. There needs to be opened up a vast new area of value and meaning to human existence. The challenges of 19th century Protestant ethics and New England piety need to be judged for their mid-twentieth century space age relevance. There must be more to life than work, thrift, and fear of God. When is work unproductive? When is thrift false? When is fear of God a tribal ritual? We must face the fact that hard work just may not be sufficient for passage to Heaven. A-penny-saved-is-a-penny-earned economic philosophy may not carry us through the years ahead. A tribal fear of God is an insult to His divine plan for man.

In the cluttered community of material abundance which we all experience we must provide for elbow room of the mind and spirit. We have to learn that the production of hard goods is not the sole test of man's worth. We must provide the means whereby the sense of beauty, love, wisdom, and God become functional realities in the life of man. They must be the property of us all. They must be part of the day-to-day pattern of living.

Today we worship science and the rational decision. We honor objectivity and reason. We are secure when science makes an advance. But science and reason play a hard game with man. They scrape away the myths and illusions. Air castles come tumbling down. Soil is for crop production. Cows are for milk and meat. Electricity heats the water. Things and people are defined in terms of function, how they are used. The problem of content of meaning beyond use is not a relevant question in this scientific era. Beauty, love, wisdom, and God could very well become alien values in a society dedicated to the philosophy that the values associated only with objectivity and unimpassioned thought have relevance to the contemporary community.

What has been said must not be confused with a yearning for a reactionary, moss back philosophy. Country life and agriculture, if they are to continue to hold important positions in American life must make the necessary adjustments to capitalize on the changes in ways of living and making a living. Adjustments must not only be made in the economic and social life of the community, but also in its moral, intellectual, and spiritual life. We are not advocating a compromise position where convictions and beliefs are weakened. We are saying, however, that the traditional means of value experience no longer fit our time. The gap between beliefs and practices is widening. We want to be just in dealing with our fellows, but are fearful of the consquence of justice. This sets up a situation where we smile at human weakness and inefficiency and write them off as "human nature."

The cold war with our political foes across the ocean has provided a model for many little cold battles here at home. Everyday in the rural press, and in hundreds of meetings the cold war of idealogical differences with regard to country life and agriculture is being fought.

There are those in the camp of Thomas Jefferson and those who see Alexander Hamilton as their patron saint. The former group wave their flag for the family farm and all of its associated values, while the latter work hard at redefining agriculture and country life to fit the emerging industrial-urban way of life. The possibility of marrying these points of view is aired on occasion. The problem seems to be one of finding the formula by which we can have our cake and eat it too. Can the traditional values associated with the craft-like agricultural economy of the 19th century be hooked to the efficiency orientation of the farm firm? Can the traditional conservatism of the rural village be operative in the expanding rural community where the forces of the market place and the business world give direction to the day-to-day life?

It would appear that there is little hope in attempting to unite the specific values of one period with the specific practices of another. This is bound to produce at the worst a two-faced people and at the best a frustrated people.

If one generalizes beyond the specifics of the hoe culture of our ancestors, the value questions are no longer rural or agricultural. They have to do with man's ultimate concerns. It seems that this is the heart of the issue. The problem is not one of rural values but rather one of what values, beliefs, norms, and myths are needed to guide people through the present and on into the future. Is there hope for the development of a way of life in the human community that will yield for each person, regardless of occupation or station, the fullest sense of self-fulfillment? What kinds of value orientations does a community development program need to provide avenues for full use of our God-given potential?

The community is a product of man. It is therefore subject to, and has built into it, the weaknesses resulting from man's insufficiency. This is inevitable. Communities have reflected man's advancement since the fall of Adam and Eve. But the direction is not toward Eden; it is away from Eden. The human community is man's handiwork. It is his image of Eden resulting from a man-to-man covenant. It is human civilization.

Man is master in the human community. But in this power position there is likely to be experienced a terrible emptiness of purpose. The barns are full. The milk check is increased. The mortgage is paid. The children are happily married. But what does it add up to? What is next? This is the question to which we addressed ourselves at the outset of this discussion. After all the problems of creature comforts are solved, there remains the problem of man trying to live with himself; and there is the problem of man's relationship to God. These are more than church questions. They are at the root of all the problems man encounters in his earthly existence.

Community development, therefore, cannot thrive for long on being concerned only for the short run human needs. In addition, community development must be concerned about man and his destiny. Ultimately each one of us has to face our moments of truth. It may be in the doctor's office, in the funeral home, or alone with a loved one. The point is that there is no escape from having to stand alone before God and make decisions involving the highest stakes. Whatever else community development is, it must help man to face decision.

Decision is an apparently uniquely human attribute. Values are implicit in all decision making. Good and bad, right and wrong are ever present in the decision-making process. There is a hidden paradox. A closer examination reveals that the problem is never a choice between right and wrong. It is one of choosing the lesser of two evils. When man comes to full appreciation of this predicament, he will understand that to be human is to be less than perfect. This should greatly reduce the possibility of man flaunting his power and his ability. An appreciation of human limitations should go a long way toward maintaining a humble approach to the problems man faces.

Workers in the area of community development who bring only scientific and practical knowledge to bear on human problems fill the sandals of Adam. The moral and theological aspects of decision making have to be included. All the science and government subsidy a society can muster won't solve the chronic human problems. Underneath the seeming prosperity and veneered good life in the community there remains the gnawing questions of value and meaning to life.

Western civilization and America in particular have a style of life which is testimony to man's skill in conquering nature. The earthly forces have been brought under control to a large extent. Outstanding accomplishments in the area of social and economic control are observable. Art in all of its forms flourishes in western society. Everywhere one turns the hand of man is evident. The challenge to Adam has survived the centuries. But in this struggle of man to create his own Eden there remains the big frustration that Adam faced. Does man think he is playing God?

Answers to the question posed above are not easy to come by because another uniquely human trait is that of rationalizing one's acts. Justification of one's action before the community is a constant pressure.

In truth there is falsehood. In honesty there is dishonesty. In virtue there is vice. This is to be human. The community can only exist if it refrains from probing too deeply into man's motives. A life of truth is impossible in our society. A life of falsehood is also impossible. People have a right to know this and be concerned. In awareness of human limitation is the hope for the community. In the knowledge that the very best that man can do will fall short of perfection there will develop

the values that will insure a significant human integrity.

This paper has been an attempt to cast the value question in a framework which is not built upon the traditional cultural norms of the community. It moved ahead on the assumption that man's values fluctuate around two core ideas: the uniqueness of man in the natural world and the omnipotent position of God. The unique feature of man is his self-awareness or consciousness, his ability to reflect on himself as a creature in the world but not completely of it. He has a sense of being which transcends other forms of life. Man sees himself as a spiritual being as well as a natural phenomenon. He is conscious of his social nature, living one with another. He is aware of the moral aspects of human existence. And he appreciates in himself the presence of a mind capable of creative thought far in excess of other forms of animal life. In this self-awareness man fills his life with meaning. He assigns value to the world around him. He develops guiding principles by which to live.

The value problem will never be resolved. The most that can be hoped for, and indeed this may be enough, is that man continues to ask significant questions about himself and his destiny. In these questions there is the hope for man to continue to dream of the community of perfection, the community that transcends the limitations of man. Now, more than ever before in our history we need to develop a creed by which we can not only live and work, but by which we can judge our life and labor and orient ourselves for the future. Let us sincerely try to make a beginning in building a framework for an enriched life and work experience in the country community.

Letter to the Editor

• I have just read the October issue of Town and Country Church and was intrigued by the leading article on "Mileage and Travel-Expense Records." This seems to be a very exact method of dealing with a difficult problem, yet I cannot help but feel that it would also be desperately exacting. In light of this I thought you might be interested to know about the system operating in the Diocese of Nova Scotia (Anglican).

In its simplest form the system is nothing more than grouping parishes into four different categories as far as travel needs are concerned and then setting a fixed rate of allowance for each category. It seems too simple to be of any value and that is its greatest appeal.

Nova Scotia is primarily a rural diocese not too many years removed from the horse-and-buggy days when clergy were on the road more but travelled less, when every rectory came equipped with a wood-lot for the rector's spare time and a field or pasture for the horse's spare time. While one might philosophize endlessly on how clergy used to move more slowly but accomplish more work it must be recognized that transportation everywhere has undergone a tremendous revolution. No small part of this concerns the relative cost, relative to what it used to be and relative to the clerical salary. Moreover, in Nova Scotia at least, it appears that parishes requiring the greatest amount of travel have been least able to meet the cost.

Twenty years ago the parishes of this diocese were all paying independent salaries based on nothing more than the individual parish's ability to pay. Hardships for the clergy were universal but they varied extremely from parish to parish. A diocesan fund made grants to help alleviate the situation, but no "extras" for this or that were recognized. The first step towards progress came with the fixing of a minimum salary for all the clergy. This was supported where necessary by grants from the diocesan fund. Through his whole episcopal ministry our Bishop, the Rt. Rev. R. H. Waterman, has given unrelenting attention to the needs of his clergy and it is through him there now exists this practical plan.

A committee studied the sizes of the parishes, the mileage travelled in Sunday routines, the roads and other conditions and arranged the above-mentioned categories. On top of the minimum salary the Bishop started off by adding four, five, six or seven hundred dollars for A, B, C, or D category for travel. It was to be recorded as such both for pension and income-tax purposes. Since then the rates have twice been increased to the present six, seven, eight and nine hundred level.

This system is easy to administer. Self-supporting parishes add the amount to the salary they pay while aided parishes have grants adjusted to make possible the pay of the minimum and the travel-allowance. The scheme avoids the necessity of keeping intricate and detailed travel-logs of every trip every day and raising the possibility of constant argument over waste or carelessness. There is no adequate way of separating the pastoral and private time or travel in a clergyman's daily round and this scheme avoids the necessity of stabbing at it. Each rector simply travels as he deems best, in holiday and workday, Sunday and weekday; he buys a big car or a little one, as he prefers; he can change the oil himself or pay to have it done. All he needs to remember is that he must pay out of his private salary all amounts over and above the allowed rate. Of course, situations continually change and some parishes once on A category are now in B or some other. This is arranged through the diocesan office without difficulty so long as the relative positions are not disturbed.

There is some organized effort in the diocese towards setting up a Graduated Salary Scale for all the clergy. There is still much spade work to be done in this respect but if it ever comes the present Travel Scheme will fit into it extremely well as an integral part of what the Graduated Scale really means. In the meantime there is general approval and support for this much of it. After all, a half a loaf is better than none, and this is considered a mighty important piece of the loaf.

—C. R. Elliott
Lantz, Hants County,
Nova Scotia

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BOOK REVIEW

Two Gentle Men. By Marchette Chute. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. 1959. $5.00.

The lives of George Herbert and Robert Herrick are the subject of this book by one of England's well-known biographers. These men lived during the same age, both graduates from Cambridge University, both became country clergymen of the Church of England in the same year (1630), both produced a book of poems, both were interested in peace on earth in a warlike time. But as clergymen they differed greatly, and the Church of England had to be a broad institution to contain both.

George Herbert was parish priest at Bemerton, very near the beautiful Salisbury Cathedral. He is regarded as a saintly man, and the saintliness is reflected in the grave beauty of his book, *A Priest to the Temple, or, The Country Parson.* Herbert wrote this book because he wished to put a high standard before himself. Since Herbert's day, many a dedicated country parson has received guidance from the rector at Bemerton through his book. Herbert was also one of that small company of clergymen willing to give up an urban career in order to minister to rural people.

Robert Herrick came from a middle-class family of Leicester. He loved his family and shared in that family's love of "a good time." He loved the city of London as well as his parish of Dean Prior. But his poems are often of the fields, flowers, and country ways. This biographer thinks there were strong pagan tendencies in this Christian parson-poet, and that he was a happy man. When he reached the age of fifty-seven his collected poems were published under the title, *Hesperides and Noble Numbers.*

—Benson Y. Landis